

South Dakota State Test of Educational Progress-Alternate

GRADES K-11



2007 Directions for Administering



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Introduction

The Dakota STEP Alternate Assessment (*Dakota STEP-A*) measures the academic skills of students with significant cognitive disabilities. The assessment is based on and aligned with the South Dakota Alternate Content Standards. The *Dakota STEP-A* assessment consists of the following components:

- Rating Forms composed of grade-specific tasks/skills that are aligned with the South Dakota Alternate Content Standards (2 per student)
- Supporting Evidence* consisting of student work samples and documentation provided by the student's Special Education teacher to demonstrate the student's abilities relative to specific Rating Form tasks/skills

Thoroughly review these *Directions for Administering* to ensure accurate and reliable results before beginning the assessment.

Steps for Completing the Dakota STEP-A Assessment

1. Rater 1 (Special Education teacher) identifies tasks/activities from the Rating Form for Supporting Evidence.*

Supporting Evidence for identified tasks is collected and appropriately documented on the Data Collection Form. The collection and documentation of evidence can occur throughout the testing window.

2. Rater 1 completes the first Rating Form.

Rater 1 determines the performance level for all of the tasks/skills on the Rating Form based on Supporting Evidence documentation and knowledge of the student's abilities.

3. Rater 2 completes a second Rating Form.

Once Rater 1 has collected and documented all Supporting Evidence, a second Rating Form with Supporting Evidence documented by the Special Education teacher is provided to Rater 2 for completion. Rater 2 determines the performance level for all of the tasks/skills on the Rating Form based on supporting evidence documentation and knowledge of the student's abilities.

4. Score Resolution**

Once Rater 2 has completed and returned the Rating Form to Rater 1, the Special Education teacher reviews both Rating Forms to determine which, if any, tasks require a score resolution. All tasks with Supporting Evidence not rated identically require resolution prior to submitting evidence to Harcourt Assessment for scoring. Resolution of scores for all other tasks is at the discretion of Rater 1.

*Supporting Evidence is only required for students in grades 3 through 8 and 11.

**Score Resolution is only required for students in grades 3 through 8 and 11.

Responsibilities of the Special Education Teacher

The Special Education teacher (Rater 1) is the designated leader and coordinator for the administration of the *Dakota STEP-A* and is responsible for:

- Independently completing one Rating Form for each student.
- Providing Supporting Evidence for Reading and Mathematics at grades 3 through 8 and 11, and Science at grades 5, 8, and 11.
- Recruiting one colleague (Rater 2) who knows and works with the student on a regular basis to independently review Supporting Evidence and complete a Rating Form for the student. This could be another special educator, paraprofessional, general education teacher, speech/language therapist, administrator, or other qualified individual. The student's parent cannot be a rater.
- Conducting score resolution if Rating Form tasks/skills do not have identical ratings.
- Assembling, packaging, and returning materials to the test coordinator.

Evaluating More Than One Student

Special Education teachers and colleagues may need to rate more than one student in a classroom, special school, or facility. It is important to carefully evaluate each student as an individual and not to compare students with one another. Breaks are encouraged after completing the Rating Form for each student to ensure the objectivity of ratings.

Completing the Demographic Data Page

Each rater must complete the information on the Demographic Data page found on the back cover of the Rating Forms.

Student Information

Provide the student's name, gender, student ID number, grade, and date of birth.

Write in the student's school, district, and resident school and district if different from the school and district that the student is attending. Provide the name of the student's Special Education teacher and the teacher's e-mail address. Indicate the student's race/ethnicity.

Rater Information

Enter the rater's name, date of completion for the Rating Form, and the position of the rater. Each rater must acknowledge his or her attendance at pretest training workshops and/or review of training materials provided on the Department of Education website at http://doe.sd.gov/oess/specialed/Assessment_Standards/index.asp.

Dakota STEP-A Student Survey

The student's Special Education teacher is to complete the student characteristics survey located on the inside back cover of each Rating Form. Only one survey needs to be completed for each student. The information gathered from this survey will in no way impact the student's score, but it will be used to analyze the overall student population participating in the alternate assessment and to plan training and professional development.

Dakota STEP-A Rating Forms

Two *Dakota STEP-A* Rating Forms are to be completed for each student by the primary Special Education teacher (Rater 1) and a colleague (Rater 2) according to their knowledge of the student's current performance level at the time of the assessment. The intention is to ensure that the assessment results provide the most accurate possible profile of the student's achievement as observed and evaluated by educational professionals across multiple settings throughout the assessment time period.

Rater 1 The student's primary Special Education teacher

Rater 2 A colleague who knows and works with the student on a regular basis, this could be another special educator, general education teacher, or other qualified individual. The student's parent cannot be a rater.

Directions for Completing the Rating Form

The *Dakota STEP-A* Rating Form measures academic skills or tasks in Reading and Mathematics as well as Science at grades 5, 8, and 11. Ratings indicate the degree to which a student is able to perform each skill. *Please rate every task*, even if some skills or activities do not seem to apply to the student or are difficult to rate.

Performance Level	Performance Description
Nonexistent	The student may be aware of or attend to the task in a highly structured setting, but he/she is currently unable to perform any part of the skill or demonstrate any knowledge and consequently unable to attempt without full physical prompting.
Minimal	The student attends to a task and can respond to some part of the knowledge and skills in at least one setting when given significant physical, verbal, visual, or other prompting. The student may take a long time to respond but will indicate some attempt, either correct or incorrect, with accuracy up to 25%.
Emerging	After instruction and/or modeling, the student's performance may be somewhat inconsistent in terms of accuracy, but he/she can respond to most or all of the task in at least one setting with moderate prompting, if necessary, with accuracy generally ranging from 25–49%.
Progressing	The student consistently performs the task in more than one setting with minimal prompting (repeat directions no more than 5 times or repeat directions in the middle of the task) with an accuracy level generally ranging from 50–79% if performed independently or 50–100% with minimal prompting.
Accomplished	The student consistently and independently performs the task across multiple settings with an accuracy level generally ranging from 80–100%.

Performance Descriptions Regarding Prompting

Raters may find the following descriptions of prompting helpful when evaluating each student's performance:

Full physical prompting ("Nonexistent" rating) requires the teacher to use "hand-over-hand" prompting throughout the entire task.

Significant prompting ("Minimal" rating) involves prompts throughout the task. The student attends to what he or she is doing by looking at the task and will attempt the task by reaching, making a verbal response, or through the use of assistive technology.

Moderate prompting ("Emerging" rating) includes touching the student's elbow to begin or continue the task; modeling may be done by the teacher or may be a model that the student follows, such as an alphabet strip used in order to alphabetize.

Minimal prompting ("Progressing" rating) includes providing verbal cues or touch cues to initiate or redirect the student.

For each content-based skill/task on the Rating Form, each rater indicates the performance level at which the student is observed performing each task or skill.

	PERFORMANCE LEVEL					Aligned with student's IEP goals and objectives	Supporting evidence submitted
	Nonexistent	Minimal	Emerging	Progressing	Accomplished		
1. Attends to a story or teacher-led presentation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Indicates preference for a book or story.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Participates in action songs or finger plays.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

☒ **Aligned with student's IEP goals and objectives** (column)

Rater 1 (Special Education teacher) must indicate whether or not each task or skill is aligned with the student's IEP plan by checking the corresponding square in the IEP-aligned column. (Leave the square blank if the task/skill is not a part of the student's IEP.) This does not impact the student's score. This information will be used to analyze the skills being addressed overall for this population and for professional development.

☒ **Supporting evidence submitted** (column)

Rater 1 (Special Education teacher) must indicate which task or skill rating is supported with samples of student work (evidence). This column is applicable for grades 3 through 8 and 11 only.

Supporting Evidence Requirements

Supporting Evidence for students in grades 3 through 8 and 11 is required and must be provided in a format that allows an independent evaluator to understand the student's performance of a particular skill identified on the Rating Form, such as:

- A work sample (a worksheet, an essay, a model, etc.).
- Annotated photographs that show the student accomplishing the entire task.
- Videos of the student with an explanation of the task.
- Audiotapes with scripts of oral tasks, etc.

Whenever possible, tasks/activities that are aligned to the student's IEP should be selected for Supporting Evidence. The sample submitted should provide evidence of performance of an entire task (or as much of the task as the student accomplished). For example, if photographs are submitted, the photos should show the entire process of completing the task, not just the end product. The mode of the work sample should take into account the skill and how it is performed (e.g., on paper for written work, on videotape for visually perceptible tasks, or on audiotape for oral tasks).

Supporting Evidence must be collected for each of the following content objectives:

Reading—a total of 4 submissions, one from each of the following content strands for students in grades 3 through 8 and 11:

1. Reading Comprehension Strategies
2. Response to Literacy
3. Reading of Diverse Works, Cultures, and Time Periods
4. Reading Informational Text

Mathematics—a total of 5 submissions, one from each of the following content indicators for students in grades 3 through 8 and 11:

1. Algebra
2. Geometry
3. Measurement
4. Number Sense
5. Statistics and Probability

Science—a total of 4 or 5 submissions, one from each of the following content indicators for students in grades 5, 8, and 11:

1. Nature of Science (grades 8 and 11 only)
2. Physical Science (grades 5, 8, and 11 only)
3. Life Science (grades 5 and 11 only)
4. Earth/Space Science (grades 5, 8, and 11 only)
5. Science, Technology, Environment, and Society (grades 5, 8, and 11 only)

Assessment of students with significant cognitive disabilities in kindergarten, grades 1 and 2, and grades 9 and 10 ("off grades") is not a statewide requirement but is available for districts that conduct districtwide assessment. Supporting Evidence (samples of student work) and score resolution is not required for students in off grades and will not be scored.

Data Collection Form for Supporting Evidence

Rater 1 is to complete one Data Collection Form for each submission of Supporting Evidence. This form is used to summarize and provide documentation of the student work sample and includes:

1. The content area and Rating Form task number for which the evidence is being submitted.
2. The date(s) of the assessment and number of trials.
3. The range of scores obtained.
4. The setting(s) and personnel.
5. The type of evidence submitted.
6. A narrative addressing each of the following for the Supporting Evidence:
 - description of activity
 - student response
 - type and level of support (prompts/cues)
 - frequency
 - accuracy

The Data Collection Form shown on page 10 will be provided with student assessment materials. This form may be duplicated if additional copies are needed and is available online at http://doe.sd.gov/oess/specialed/Assessment_Standards/index.asp for those who prefer to complete the document electronically. Once completed, the form must be printed and returned with the Supporting Evidence.

Score Resolution Worksheet

Once Rater 2 has completed and returned the Supporting Evidence and second Rating Form to Rater 1, Rater 1 reviews both Rating Forms to determine which if any tasks require score resolution. All tasks with Supporting Evidence not rated identically require resolution prior to submitting the evidence to Harcourt Assessment for scoring. Resolution of scores for all other tasks is at the discretion of Rater 1.

Raters 1 and 2 should review the ratings and Supporting Evidence in order to reach consensus on a score. Ratings should not be changed on the Rating Forms; a Score Resolution Worksheet must be completed to document the agreed-upon score.

To complete the Score Resolution Worksheet:

1. Complete the Rater 1 and Rater 2 information as well as the student information.
2. Identify the Rating Form task number(s) for which a consensus score is reached.
3. Enter the rating(s) for each task listed by Rater 1.
4. Enter the rating(s) for each task listed by Rater 2.
5. Enter the Final Resolution Rating.

Score Resolution Worksheets (as shown on page 11) are provided with assessment materials and can be copied if additional worksheets are needed.

Dakota STEP-A
Data Collection Form for Supporting Evidence

Student: _____

Student Information Number (SIMS): _____

Grade: _____

School: _____

Date: _____

District: _____

Content Area: _____

Rating Form Item Number: _____

Dates Assessed and Number of Trials: _____

Range of Scores Obtained: _____

Setting and Personnel:

☐ One setting (specify)

☐ Multiple settings (specify)

Type of Evidence Included:

☐ Work sample

☐ Media – photo, video, audio

☐ Data Collection Form

☐ Other: _____

Purpose of the Task and the Expected Student Performance:

Include or attach a narrative addressing each of the following for the attached piece of evidence:

① Description of activity

④ Frequency

② Student response

⑤ Accuracy

③ Type and level of support (prompts/cues)

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 A B C D E

Name of Rater 1 (Special Education Teacher):

District: _____ District Code: _____

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 A B C D E



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999-8571-35-9

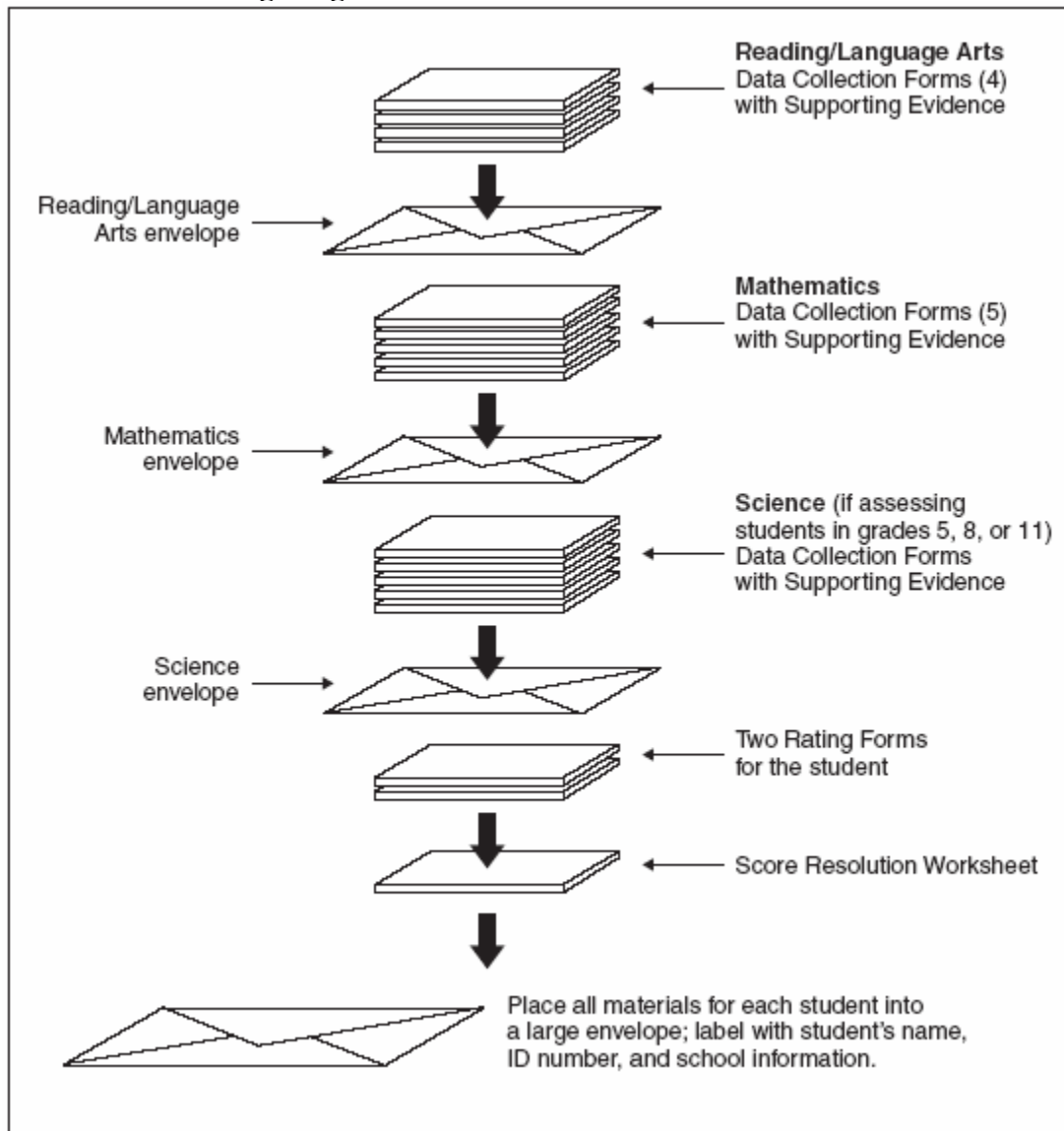
Packing *Dakota STEP-A* Materials for Scoring

Packing Dakota STEP-A Student Materials

Special Education teachers are responsible for packaging the assessment materials (Rating Forms and Supporting Evidence) for each student. Data Collection Forms must accompany each submission of Supporting Evidence. Organize Supporting Evidence by content area (Reading, Mathematics, and/or Science), and insert work samples with Data Collection Forms attached in the content-specific envelopes provided.

Organize the materials for each student as shown in the diagram. Place the assembled materials into a larger, padded envelope (or box if necessary) and label it with the student's full name, the student's ID number, and the school name.

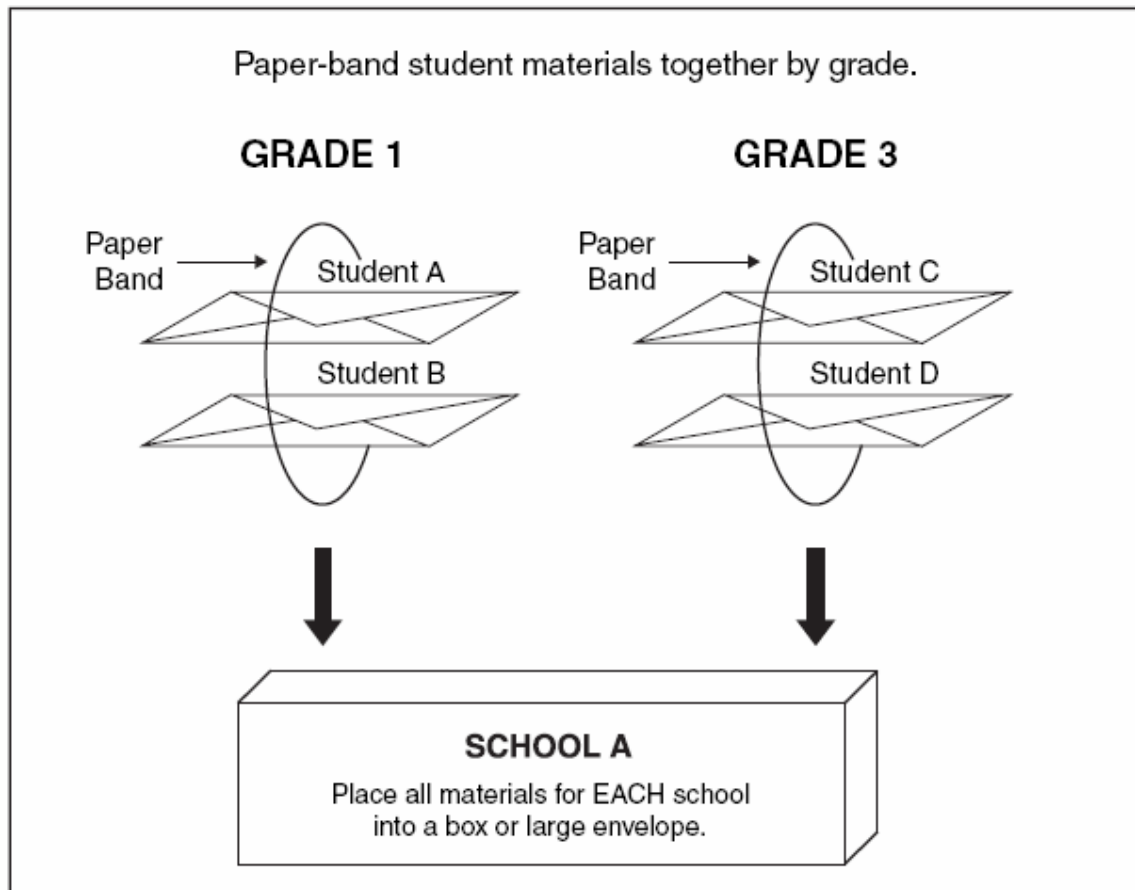
Packing Diagram for *Dakota STEP-A* Student Materials



Packing Dakota STEP-A School Materials

Special Education teachers/test coordinators are to group student materials by grade within each building.

Packing Diagram for *Dakota STEP-A* School Materials



Packing Dakota STEP-A District Materials

Test coordinators are to organize and package all *Dakota STEP-A* scorable materials by school and grade and complete the Master File Sheet. Additional information for returning scorable materials is provided within the *Dakota STEP-A* section of the *Test Coordinator's Handbook*.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: *I have two paraprofessionals that work with my students. Can they complete the Rating Forms as “Rater 1” and “Rater 2”?*

Answer: The student’s primary Special Education teacher must complete the Rating Form (as Rater 1) and provide Supporting Evidence documentation.

Question: *If I am not sure how to rate a task or skill, may I leave it blank?*

Answer: Please respond to *all* tasks on the Rating Form. Evaluate if you have observed the behavior or whether you are estimating or guessing about the frequency of the behavior. You may conduct a brief activity with the student if you are not able to make an independent judgment.

Question: *What if the student is not able to perform this activity by himself or herself, but needs help or assistance from another person?*

Answer: Please refer to *Performance Descriptions Regarding Prompting* on page 7 in order to select the appropriate Performance Level rating.

Question: *How should the tasks/activities be selected for Supporting Evidence?*

Answer: Whenever possible, it is best to collect evidence on tasks/activities that are aligned to the student’s IEP, because the student has been exposed to these tasks/activities throughout the year. If this is not possible, select a challenging task that will allow the student to demonstrate his or her knowledge to the best extent possible.

Question: *What if the student is not able to complete any activities for the collection of Supporting Evidence?*

Answer: Each student needs to have an opportunity to perform the tasks/activities selected for the Supporting Evidence component of the *Dakota STEP-A*. Every effort should be made to provide evidence of his or her attempt through the most appropriate means (photos, videos, etc.). The narrative provided on the Data Collection Form is critical in order to demonstrate the student’s exposure and opportunity to participate in each task/activity.

Question: *My student is enrolled in the 8th grade but performs on a kindergarten level. Can I administer the kindergarten assessment?*

Answer: You must administer the assessment for the grade in which the student is enrolled. If not, the assessment will be invalidated and the student will not receive a score.

Question: *What if I run out of materials?*

Answer: Request additional Rating Forms and packaging materials from your test coordinator. Rating Forms may not be photocopied prior to or following completion of student ratings. The Data Collection Forms and Score Resolution Worksheets may be copied and are available online at:
http://doe.sd.gov/oess/specialed/Assessment_Standards/index.asp

Question: *Who do I call if I have questions about completing the Rating Form?*

Answer: Contact Linda Turner at 605-773-6119 or linda.turner@state.sd.us.

Question: *What should I do if the student moves after I've submitted a Rating Form for him or her?*

Answer: Contact the Harcourt Assessment Customer Support Center at 1-800-763-2306 if the student has moved to another school or district in South Dakota. A Customer Service representative will contact the new school.

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